



Washington State Department of Agriculture News Release

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Agriculture Department issues fines for pesticide violations *1st quarter cases included several pesticide drift cases*

OLYMPIA – The Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) issued fines totaling \$5,200 and imposed license suspensions during the first quarter of 2010 for violations of state pesticide laws and rules. Fines ranged from \$450 to \$1,800 for incidents that involved damaging several vineyards as a result of roadside spraying operations, exposing people to pesticide drift, and mistakenly spraying an organic orchard with pesticides.

WSDA completed investigations in Adams, Benton, Chelan, Douglas and Yakima counties. Summaries of the investigation findings below are generally arranged by county. Fines or license suspensions were issued to:

Terry Haaland, CHS Inc., Othello, was fined \$450 and his commercial operator license was suspended for seven days. In July 2009, Haaland applied a herbicide mix to a bean field south of Othello in Adams County. The spray drifted onto a neighboring property where a woman was exposed and became ill.

Charles Minter and the Benton County Road Department were assessed a \$450 fine and Minter's public operator license was suspended for seven days. Roadside herbicide applications made by Minter in 2008 and 2009 damaged the outside rows of certain vineyards growing adjacent to county roads.

James Gollaher, Wenatchee, was fined \$900 and his private applicator license was suspended for 14 days. In April 2009, Gollaher supervised a pesticide application that drifted across a road and onto a passing truck. The following day Gollaher himself made a pesticide application without wearing all of the necessary personal protective equipment.

Daniel Farmer, Wenatchee, was fined \$900 and his commercial applicator and operator licenses were suspended for 14 days. In September 2008, Farmer made a pesticide application by helicopter to an orchard in Cashmere. The pesticide drifted onto a neighboring residence and caused one person to become ill. In a separate incident, Farmer sprayed a certified organic apple orchard near Orondo instead of a nearby orchard that he was supposed to spray. As a result of the contamination, the organic orchard lost its certification for three years.

Two farming operations were fined for violations of Worker Protection Standards—rules designed to train and protect agricultural employees who work with pesticides. Vigneron Management LLC, Grandview, was assessed a \$700 fine for failing to provide all of the necessary decontamination supplies and for not adequately supervising the care of personal protective equipment. Yakima Valley Orchards LLC was fined \$1,800 for failing to provide all of the necessary decontamination supplies and for allowing workers into a sprayed orchard before they were permitted to enter.

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